

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the

URBAN DISTRICT OF BUCKFASTLEIGH

for the year 1946.

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Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report as your Medical Officer for the year 1946.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area: 1.365 acres.

Registrar-General's estimate of resident population 2535.

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1946): 807.

Rateable value:

Sum represented by a penny rate: £52/11/10.537

The industries and social conditions of the Area are unchanged.

VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1946.

	Total	M.	F.
Live Births (Legitimate)	41	16	25
(Illegitimate)	1	1	-
Still Births (Legitimate)	-	-	-
(Illegitimate)	1	1	-

Deaths of Infants under 1 year of ago:

(Legitimate)	1	1	2
(Illegitimate)	-	-	-

Birth Rate per 1,000 Civilian Population:

Live Births 16.56  
Still Births .39

Deaths: Total M. F.  
25 9 16

Death Rate per 1,000 Civilian Population: 9.86

Infantile Mortality Rate per 1,000 Live Births: 23.8

1930-1931

$$\left( \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} \right) \right) \left( \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{2} \right) \right)$$

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For England and Wales during 1946:

Birth Rate	19.1
Death Rate	11.5
Infantile Mortality Rate	43.

Age Groups at Death:

50 - 60	60 - 70	70 - 80	80 - 90	90
3	10	5	4	1

There were only 2 deaths under 50: one a baby one day old, and a young woman of 24.

The average age of the 20 deaths over 60 years of age was 73.

The causes of death were:-

Diseases of the Heart	9
Cancer	3
Cerebral Haemorrhage	2
Arterio-Sclerosis	2
Leukaemia	2
Pneumonia	1
Senile Decay	3
Other Diseases	3

There was no maternal mortality, and the only infant who died survived its birth only 15 hours.

There were no deaths from Tuberculosis or any other infectious disease, except Pneumonia.

Altogether, this is the best report of vital statistics that I have been able to present during my 36 years service as M. O. H.

#### GENERAL HEALTH

One case of Scarlet Fever was notified and was adequately isolated at home.

No cases of Venereal disease were notified.

One case of Pulmonary Tuberculosis was notified and sent to the County Sanatorium at Hawkmoor.

#### DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

During the Summer of 1935 immunisation was offered to all children attending the Elementary Schools and about 90% accepted. In addition to those, many other children under School age were immunised by the M.O.H. and private practitioners.

In 1940 about 400 children from S. London and Gravesend who had NOT been immunised were evacuated to the Urban District and an epidemic of Diphtheria broke out very shortly after their arrival, the first cases being amongst the evacuees. 1.5% of the local children who had accepted immunisation were infected and one died.



One result of this was that "immunisation campaigns" have been unnecessary, parents bringing their children up for immunisation as soon as they have reached the age of 1 year, and periodic revisions have been carried out at the School.

During 1946, 30 infants were immunised at the Infant Welfare Centre and 87 at the School by the D.C.C. School Medical Officer. About 50 await a renewal due during 1947.

It is certain that more than 90% of the children in the Urban District have received at least one course of Immunisation treatment, and that is probably an under estimate, as I have not received any refusals from parents.

#### WATER SUPPLY

The water supply is ample in quantity and good in quality. It is collected by land main pipes laid in a moorland moss, which flow into a collecting chamber at the source, from which it is led by closed iron pipes to a reservoir holding 225,000 gallons just outside the boundary of the Urban District.

From the reservoir it is piped to nearly every house, a few outlying farms and cottages excepted. These are adequately supplied from wells.

There are also a few old cottages supplied from stand pipes. Those had been closed before the war, but had to be re-opened to house people evacuated from blitzed areas.

The distribution is good except at Higher Buckfast, which is situated at the end of a 3" main,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles long. Since this was laid nearly 50 years ago, more than 40 houses have been built, nearly all at its far end, and their water supply has been getting worse and worse for years.

My Council instructed Water Engineers to prepare a scheme for the augmentation of the supply to this area during 1944, but owing to various delays, the final approval of the Ministry was not obtained until this summer, and the actual work was begun in November, 1946.

During the summer the Water supply in Higher Buckfast nearly failed and a number of devices were tried to improve it without much success, and for most of the remainder of the year water was supplied by cart, and the inhabitants suffered great hardship.

The water is liable to have plumbo-solvant action and considerable difficulty has been experienced in overcoming this.

The present installation is working well, and the results of several analyses have shown the water as supplied to the houses to be free from lead.

No bacterial or other contamination has been found in these analyses.

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DRAINAGE & SEWERAGE.

The present works are too small and during the year my Council has been considering the plans prepared by Messrs. Balfour in 1939.

Extra work on the irrigation meadows has been successful in preventing any pollution of the River Dart.

HOUSING

My Council acquired an admirable site on which it is proposed to build 70 houses.

Plans for the first 30 have been approved by the Ministry and the work has begun.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) SYDNEY R. WILLIAMS.

